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Sonar Prods. specializes in synthesizing

By BILL DESOWITZ

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Sonar Prods., headed by wunderkinds Brian Banks and Anthony Marinelli, has been responsible for creating synthesized music and effects for various films, including "The Body," "The Best of Times," "The Color Purple," "Clan of the Cave Bear," "Starman," "Blue Thunder" and "Cat People."

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Banks and Marinelli, who last year designed and built a fully equipped studio with two 24-track control rooms, each boasting a Synclavier Digital Music System, analog synthesizers and video equipment, have earned the reputation as "tag team synthesists." Each complements the other in programming millions of diverse sounds onto synthesizers.

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"We think that we are the best at what we do," boasted Banks. "We don't just dabble with synthesizers —

we specialize in them and have done more synthesized work for films than anyone else. We not only program, score, cue and orchestrate, but we are consultants with New England Digital, the manufacturer of the Synclavier, and designed many of the instrument's functions."

Banks and Marinelli spend a lot of time assisting film composers in the studio and were responsible for the first digital synthesis and sampling for a film with "Blue Thunder," and programmed and performed the first polaroid (orchestral simulation) of the entire musical score for "The Color Purple."

"As far as we know, this was the first time this had ever been done," Marinelli said. "We simulated the orchestration of the score before the sessions so Steven Spielberg could do his editing. This saved time and

money."

The duo also devised special sound effects such as the mother ship in "Starman," extending beyond the usual musical parameters. "We enjoy listening to all kinds of sounds and programming them into the synthesizer to see what happens," Banks said. "For instance, once when we simulated strings, we programmed the sounds of insects from the Muir Woods and overdubbed them."

Their goal is to expand their own compositional work for film (they are composing the upcoming animated "Pinocchio") and to record and perform.

According to the duo, working with synthesizers has its creative limitations in that the programming is slow, among other things. However, Banks said he looks forward to creating the same synthesized sounds in a live performance as in the studio.

Fuji, HBO ink pact for blank tape rebates

By CHUCK ROSS

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In a joint promotion with Fuji brand blank video tapes, Home Box Office will offer new cable subscribers

that Maxell did between March 1 and May 15. Maxell rebated \$5 if a consumer sent in proofs of purchase of

compatibility, a question often asked is whether it is enough to stem the softness in pay. Much of that soft-